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## TEAM GAMES AND CIVIC LOYALTY

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It was my privilege last summer to have charge of the great Inter-City Public Schools Athletic Meet at the St. Louis World's Fair. Here teams from New York, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco, and so on, representing both high and elementary schools, assembled for athletic competition in track and field sports, relay racing, and basketball. While it is true that the development of city life throws an increased interest upon physical exercise consciously developed by means of athletics, still these results, in so far as they relate directly to interschool athletic competitions, are but a small fraction of the total results, because athletics are primarily social and moral in their nature. Only a small fraction of the students of a school can actually engage in an interschool athletic contest, and yet the spirit of athletics, the loyalty to school, the morality shown, and the social conscience developed includes in its grasp all the students of the school fully as much as it does those that actually compete. Required gymnastics of all the students of an institution rest upon hygienic or physiological grounds, while interschool athletics rest upon moral and social grounds. These teams, representing the different cities, rapidly developed the kind of team spirit which makes for individual subordination and the co-operation of the whole group with reference to the attainment of the single end, which is the best performance possible in the sport.

The loyalty of the New York boys, whom I saw the most of, and the magnificent team games of basket-ball played by the two New York teams (one from Flushing High School, and the other from Public School No. 20, Manhattan, situated in the most congested part of the city), were a splendid demonstration of the opportunity that team athletic sports give for the development of that kind of power which is larger than individual power; which subordinates the individual; which produces a conscience larger than the con-

science which recognizes only that individual righteousness; which develops social honesty as distinguished from individual honesty. It must be understood that the boys who went to St. Louis were the representatives of all the boys of the public schools of the city. Over 10,000 boys in our public schools actually entered into competition for places on the team to go to St. Louis, and the moral and social effects of the co-operative endeavor of the St. Louis team were merely the summing-up of similar endeavors extending through a large fraction of the schools of the city. The spirit of fair play, since the introduction of these athletic contests in New York City, and since they have been maintained and carried on with the most rigorous regard for honesty and courtesy, as well as vigor and intensity, has grown greatly.

I take it as a basal fact, with reference to all of the social qualities, as well as the individual qualities, which are manifested in adult life, that they must have their basis in some specific quality of the individual, and particularly some quality in action. It is not sufficient in the cultivation of individual honesty to give maxims, illustrations, or formal instructions. A boy does not have honesty become a part of his character until it has worked out in action, until he does the thing that is honest of his own volition, until this has become a part of his organic nature; so that, in looking for the groundwork, or perhaps better the germs of social morality, social honesty and conscience, we must discover the elements in boy activity which are distinctively "group" in their character, and which may at the same time make for these high virtues.

The largest single group activity of boys is in gangs, and one of the most wholesome forms of gang activity is in team athletic sports. The gang is a beneficent thing. It is a manifestation of group loyalty; but at present in most of our large cities the whole tendency of the gang is evil, because the major part of its activities is and almost must be against the social order.

It is the function of school athletics, when rightly conducted, to convert this gang instinct from evil to righteousness; to make its product social righteousness, rather than social unrighteousness; to convert into terms of actual living, intense interests and activities, the academic discussion which is so often given to them.

Social education is going on with all boys. It is not possible to, nor would we, alter this; but we must see to it that the education is good rather than bad. The gang is the masculine social unit. It is the modern representative of the tribe. It is the germ out of which the club and society develop. It is the chief formative element in determining the character of a very large number of boys, because the public opinion of the gang is for very many the largest and strongest public opinion that there is.

Athletic sports give an opportunity for the direct using of this great social power so as to make for honesty and loyalty. There is no one thing in a school which makes for school loyalty so much as good school athletics. The argument, as already suggested, that only a few boys, and they the ones that need the physical exercises the least, are called into interschool athletics, does not apply, because the major end of athletics is the spirit which is back of all the athletics, and which so largely controls and influences the whole spirit of the institution. By being loyal to his gang, and having the gang clean and moral, or being loyal to his class and his school, the qualities of loyalty, of social morality, and of social conscience are being developed. These are the essential elements out of which social loyalty and morality may be developed.

The one opportunity that schools have to develop feeling and action, with reference to other institutions as such, consists of the athletic relations to other educational institutions. Here is the one opportunity for corporate or social morality. The importance of this altogether transcends the importance of athletics as such. This form of activity is germane to the period of life in which boys and young men are, and depends upon precisely those mental, moral, and social qualities out of which the higher civilization is built. Hence I consider it a matter of supreme importance, inasmuch as I believe that there is something in the world larger than individualism, that there be athletic relations, and that these athletic relations be upon the highest plane of social morality.